



# THE COMPTROLLER'S CORNER

## Stretching Our Budgets

A few weeks ago the Air Force submitted its budget request to Congress. For FY01 we requested \$71.2 billion in funds the Air Force controls.

If approved by Congress, this budget would meet key Air Force needs. Our budget request puts people first by funding pay raises above the expected private-sector level, improving basic allowances for housing, and sharply increasing funding for numerous recruiting and retention programs. The request also focuses on near-term readiness, increasing funding for spares, and requesting money for almost 300 upgrade programs, including many designed to improve reliability and maintainability. Modernization funds pay for the F-22 fighter, C-17 airlifter, space programs including SBIRS and EELV, and many other weapon programs. To the extent funds permit, we also strive to maintain our bases and buildings with new construction and maintenance dollars.

While it would meet our key needs, this budget is tight. We do not meet all our budgetary requirements, especially those associated with infrastructure. Therefore the Air Force must take steps to make our dollars go as far as possible, and we in the FM community can help.

One way to help is through utility privatization, described in the article on page 14. By getting private companies to replace our old utility systems, we avoid large up-front costs that we cannot currently afford. We can also stretch our budget dollars by using activity-based costing and management to make our business activities more efficient. These and other initiatives require financial expertise that FMers can provide. In addition, we need Congressional support for our budget requests and all our programs. Careful adherence to new-start procedures, described in the article on page 18, can help maintain that support.

Working as part of the Air Force team, we can get the most from our tight budgets.

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